

To: Connecticut General Assembly Education Committee

From: Thomas Broderick, Trumbull

Re: HB 6884

Date: March 11, 2023

To Hon. Co-Chairs Representative Jeff Currey and Senator Douglass McCrory, Ranking Members McCarty, Kathleen M. and Senator Berthel, Eric C., and Distinguished Members:

My name is Thomas Broderick and I am from Trumbull, Connecticut. I am writing in strong support of HB 6684- AAC the Recruitment, Retention, and Enhancement of the Teaching Profession. As a graduate of the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education and a teacher in the state for the last fourteen years, I am pro-Connecticut and pro-education. In John Hattie's *Visible Learning*, a meta-analysis of educational studies, teacher efficacy and credibility have some of the highest positive effects on student achievement, and this bill will be an important step in recruiting and retaining top-notch teachers for our state's high-quality schools.

Establishing a minimum teacher salary and providing a \$500 tax credit for teachers with an Initial Certificate are important steps for teacher recruitment and retention. Teaching requires a bachelor's degree and, to be competitive, a master's degree, meaning it has a high barrier-to-entry in terms of costs and time. Given how easy it is to find a full-time job in the private sector that pays well more than a starting salary in the low \$50,000—without a masters degree or license—setting a minimum salary and giving teachers a small tax break may help make it more appealing to the best and brightest young people. Additionally, the current research on minimum wages does not show overall negative shocks to the labor market, so I don't believe this would damage the profession or larger economy.

As an educator who taught in-person during the entire 2021-2022 school year, I would feel honored and recognized by the COVID benefit enhancement on my pension for those two years, and in my role as a TEAM-certified mentor teacher, I see the EdTPA system (while well-intentioned) as unnecessarily onerous for student teachers.

Finally, I'd like to address the "Educator Bill of Rights" proposed in the bill. As a long-time social studies teacher, I firmly believe in the National Council for the Social Studies' message that the "primary purpose of social studies is to help young people make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world." It is impossible to teach our students and help them live in a diverse world unless they feel safe to be who they are in our classrooms. Indeed, the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers requires us to:

- Recognize, respect and uphold the dignity and worth of students as individual human beings, and, therefore, deal justly and considerately with students
- Nurture in students lifelong respect and compassion for themselves and other human beings regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, social class, disability, religion, or sexual orientation
- Foster in students the full understanding, application and preservation of democratic principles and processes
- Uphold the professional teacher's right to teach effectively
- Uphold the principle of academic freedom

I take these professional responsibilities very seriously. This is why I have flags celebrating LGBTQ+ rights and posters honoring the heroes of Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement in my classroom side-by-side those of Washington and Madison. And as we can see in other states, the “moral arc of the universe” isn’t guaranteed to bend towards justice—it needs to be continuously pushed for. A “Bill of Rights” would keep teachers protected as they fulfill their professional responsibilities to our state and its students and parents.

I am pro-education and pro-Connecticut, and I urge this Committee and the General Assembly to support House Bill 6884- AAC the Recruitment, Retention, and Enhancement of the Teaching Profession.

Thank you for your time and dedicated public service.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Broderick

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Trumbull, Connecticut